



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Distinguished Jurist to Head The Office of Child Protection**

After an extensive and thorough search, the Board of Supervisors appointed Judge Michael Nash to be the Executive Director of the [Office of Child Protection \(OCP\)](#).

“Judge Michael Nash has stood up for abused and neglected children throughout his career and even in his retirement,” Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas said. “I look forward to working with him in this new role to implement reforms needed to ensure the safety and well-being of the most vulnerable among us.”

The Board established the OCP in June 2014, at the recommendation of the [Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection](#).

Supervisor Ridley-Thomas co-authored, with Supervisor Michael Antonovich, the [motion](#) to create the blue ribbon commission. He said the OCP should safeguard the rights of children and help them reach their full potential by adopting the following priorities:

- establishing an effective process of checks, balances and accountability from the time a child first comes into contact with any County department tasked with child welfare, protection, or investigation;
- implementing appropriate and effective systems of risk assessment, predictive analytics, and ensuring that all departments can access and communicate information without barriers;
- creating more intense engagement with, and monitoring of, families at highest risk, and increasing support for parents/caregivers who have regained custody of their children;

- working in tandem with various County departments to strengthen policies that prevent child maltreatment from occurring in the first place;
- improving response times and follow-up visits for emergency referrals through the Child Protection Hotline; and
- measuring the effectiveness of both the Dependency and Delinquency courts, and improving access to high quality, intensive and home-based mental health services.

In February 2015, County Chief Executive Officer Sachi Hamai appointed Fesia Davenport, Esq., to begin implementing the blue ribbon commission recommendations related to the OCP.

From that time, Ms. Davenport and her team were able to accomplish:

- adopting the mission statement: *Leading a broad partnership that implements meaningful solutions to improve the lives of our children and families;*
- launching a pilot program to implement joint visits so that children under age 2 can be seen by a social worker as well as a nurse;
- meeting with various departments and other partners to develop a robust plan for improving the practice of prescribing psychotropic medicine to foster and probation youth, and automating the current paper-based process to secure court approval for such medication;
- facilitating a data sharing agreement among the Department of Children and Family Services and various other departments for the purpose of conducting emergency response investigations;
- operationalizing a philanthropy liaison office within the OCP; and
- increasing support for caregivers who look after their relatives' children after the children are removed from their own homes because of allegations of abuse or neglect.

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